

S. 1402, VETERANS AND DEPENDENTS MILLENNIUM EDUCATION ACT

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, as an original co-sponsor of the House version of this measure, I commend the House and the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for bringing this long-awaited increase in education resources for veterans to quick passage. I urge the Senate to accept the House version and send this bill to the President.

In this legislation, we boost Montgomery GI bill funding significantly. The increase is fully offset and will go directly to veterans to help pay for their education. The bill would primarily increase the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) benefit from \$536 to \$600 per month on October 1, 2000, and to \$720 per month on October 1, 2002, for full-time students, with proportionate increases for part-time students. I am disappointed that we cannot offer a benefit which is tied to the real escalating costs of higher education, and plans that recognize the actual growing costs of tuition should be given their day.

As a college professor who taught and advised students who were eligible for Montgomery GI bill benefits, I know first hand the tremendous help that this program has conferred upon those who have served their nation.

I am pleased with the additional provisions of S. 1402. As amended, these include:

1. Furnishing individuals still on active duty who either turned down a previous opportunity to convert to the MGIB or had a zero balance in their Vietnam-era Veterans' Education Assistance Program (VEAP) account, the option to pay \$2,700 to convert to MGIB eligibility.

2. Increasing survivors' and dependents' educational assistance benefits for full-time students from \$485 to \$600 per month effective October 1, 2000, and \$720 per month effective October 1, 2002, with proportionate increases for part-time students; also authorizes an annual cost of living adjustment.

4. Permitting the award of Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance payments to be retroactive to the date of the entitling event, that is, service-connected death or award of 100 percent disability rating.

5. Allowing monthly educational assistance benefits to be paid between term, quarter, or semester intervals of up to 8 weeks.

6. Allowing use of MGIB benefits to pay the fee for a veteran's civilian occupational licensing or certification examination.

The added flexibility this bill would provide is crucial as more and more veterans seek higher education after their service. While this does not satisfy all the problems that may be out there or emerge in the future, it goes a long way in boosting the finest educational program for those who have served, the Montgomery GI bill.

I regret missing the vote on this important bill, where I would have voted aye on passage, as I was in the district attending my daughter's high school graduation.

TRIBUTE TO NORBERT L. KANE, AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AND CHICAGO CITIZEN

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute today to a dedicated educator who has spent the last 44 years serving the Chicago Public School (CPS) system and the Southwest side of Chicago. This year, Norbert L. Kane, an Assistant Principal at Hubbard High School, will be retiring after 35 years of hard work for local students.

Norbert Kane represents all that Chicago citizens can ask for in an educator. He is a devoted family man, married to Delores Kane and a father of six children. Professionally, Norbert excelled in the program of management for Hubbard High School—Region 5. With his many organizational talents, Norbert earned the respect of his many colleagues and students.

In addition, Norbert has been honored for his many self-less contributions to the 3rd Congressional District and Southwest Chicago. For several years, Mr. Kane administered the Combined Charities Campaign, as well as numerous blood drives. He has also served as American Legion District Commander—1st Division, while being constantly committed to the beautification of Hubbard High School.

Mr. Speaker, Hubbard High School is regrettably going to lose an outstanding Assistant Principal and public servant. It gives me great pleasure to share Mr. Kane's accomplishments with my colleagues today. Again, I thank Norbert L. Kane for his many years of service, and I wish him equal success in his retirement.

THE RESURRECTION PROJECT CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to pay tribute to the Resurrection Project (TRP) for its invaluable work creating healthy communities on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.

Founded on May 22, 1990 by a coalition of Pilsen churches, The Resurrection Project is an institution-based neighborhood organization whose mission is to build relationships and challenge people to act on their faith and values to create healthy communities through organizing, education and community development.

The Resurrection Project provides assistance through community organizing, family programs, housing services, real estate development, asset management and workforce and business development.

The Resurrection Project builds institutional power and develops new leadership by organizing through its member institutions and block club network. TRP prepares leaders to actively participate in the issues affecting their

community. TRP's Family and Community Programs respond to the developmental needs of children, adults and families by building upon their values and culture. Each program works to build skills and create opportunities that promote stronger families. TRP programs include Esperanza Familiar (Family Hope), Supportive Housing Programs and the Centro Familiar Guadalupano (Guadalupano Family Center). The Housing Services division educates families on property ownership issues and facilitates investment by residents and financial institutions into the community.

TRP staff provides home owner education, client counseling and oversees the marketing and sales for its New Homes program. The Resurrection Project also develops and renovates community-owned real estate in a sustainable, affordable manner. TRP undertakes the property acquisition, financial packaging and construction management for its rental housing and commercial developments. TRP also oversees the physical, financial and tenant management of all its properties, ensuring the long term sustainability of the organization's real estate projects. TRP is developing the economic capacity of community residents through an innovative approach to workforce and business development. The Resurrection Construction Cooperative provides entrepreneurial assistance to new and emerging construction related businesses. The Resurrection Loan Fund provides working capital loans up to one-hundred thousand dollars to these businesses. The Resurrection Employment program offers comprehensive support to individuals seeking better employment. Staff provides support on an individual basis, assessing skills and guiding participants through the job-seeking process.

Resurrection Project's exceptional work for our community has been recognized with awards such as the LaSalle Bank's Tom Gobby Community Leadership Award, BP Amoco Foundation's BP Amoco Leader Award for job creation, Bank of America's Community Impact Award and Fannie Mae Foundation's Maxwell Award of Excellence for the Production of Low Income Housing.

Some of TRPs accomplishments include building 112 new homes for low and moderate income families, developing a new daycare and after school care center for 208 children, assisting 32 local contractors to begin, develop and expand their own construction businesses, creating a bilingual second stage housing program for homeless single mothers and generating more than twenty-five million dollars in community investment.

I have witnessed the many positive accomplishments of the Resurrection Project throughout my community. The organization's hard work, commitment and dedication is invaluable to the people I serve. I commend the Resurrection Project for ten years of building affordable new homes and rental housing, helping businesses grow, challenging community residents to become leaders and strengthening families through the development of new child care centers.